

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 247836

FOR AMBASSADOR SHELDON VANCE

FOLLOWING SENT SECSTATE WASHDC INFO GENEVA PEKING BANGKOK
KUALA LUMPUR RANGOON SAIGON VIENTIANE FROM HONG KONG
08 NOV 74:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 12155

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJ: U.S. NARCOTICS CONTROL ACTIVITIES

REF: A) STATE 233134; B) STATE 241812

1. WE APPRECIATE RECEIVING REF A WHICH TELLS US OF THE
PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN NARCOTICS CONTROL WHILE ASKING FOR
A STATUS REPORT AND OUR SUGGESTIONS, AS WELL AS REF B
DESCRIBING THE WASHINGTON ORGANIZATION FOR THE NARCOTICS
CONTROL PROGRAM. COMBINED THEY GIVE US AN ENCOURAGING
OVERVIEW OF WASHINGTON INTEREST IN, AND ORGANIZATION FOR,
NARCOTICS CONTROL.

2. WE ARE PLEASED TO REPORT THAT HERE IN HONG KONG
SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IS BEING MADE TO CONTROL AND REDUCE
DRUG ABUSE. THE PROBLEM IS GREAT BECAUSE, WITH SOME
100,000 ADDICTS, HONG KONG HAS ONE OF THE LARGEST ADDICT
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POPULATIONS IN THE WORLD. THIS LARGE ADDICT POPULATION

PROVIDES AN IMPORTANT MARKET FOR THE NARCOTICS PRODUCED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA'S "GOLDEN TRIANGLE." BECAUSE OF THE READY AVAILABILITY AND THE AMOUNT OF NARCOTICS REQUIRED IN HONG KONG BY HONG KONG ADDICTS, THERE IS THE CONTINUING POSSIBILITY OF DIVERSION OF SOME OF THE SUPPLY TO THE U.S. MARKET.

3. IN RECENT MONTHS THE HONG KONG AUTHORITIES HAVE HAD INCREASING SUCCESS IN INTERDICTING NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING AND PROCESSING. MUCH OF THE SUCCESS IN SEIZING DRUG SHIPMENTS IS CORRECTLY ATTRIBUTED TO THE GREATER REGIONAL COOPERATION WHICH HONG KONG AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN URGING. THE SEIZURE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO OF A TON OF NEWLY ARRIVED OPIUM IS TYPICAL OF THE TREND IN THAT IT RESULTED FROM THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE HONG KONG POLICE WITH THE POLICE AUTHORITIES OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRY OF ORIGIN WHERE A HONG KONG POLICEMAN IS PROVIDING LIAISON. INTERDICTION OF IMPORTS OF ACETIC ANHYDRIDE (USED IN PROCESSING HEROIN) IS THE RESULT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN HONG KONG AND JAPAN. BETTER ORGANIZED POLICE WORK, IN WHICH OUR DEA OFFICE HERE CLOSELY COOPERATES, HAS CAUSED THE RATE OF SEIZURES TO GO UP AS HAS THE LOCAL PRICE OF NARCOTICS. EVEN THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PRESS IN HONG KONG IS, FOR THE FIRST TIME, SHOWING AN INTEREST IN POLICE SUCCESSES IN THE WAR AGAINST DRUG PEDDLERS. (SEPTTEL)

4. AT THE SAME TIME, HONG KONG IS SEEKING TO DEVELOP A BALANCED APPROACH TO THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM THROUGH AN INCREASE IN TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION FACILITIES. THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT'S NARCOTICS COMMISSIONER, NORMAN ROLPH, IS ASKING APPROVAL FOR A PROGRAM WHICH IN FIVE YEARS' TIME WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE 35,000 NARCOTICS PATIENTS A YEAR. THE COMMISSIONER SAYS THAT THE PROGRAM IS WITHIN BUDGETARY CAPABILITIES. TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING THE PROGRAM, THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS EMPLOYING THE ADVISORY SERVICES OF DR. ROBERT NEWMAN, THE EXPERIENCED FORMER DIRECTOR OF NEW YORK CITY'S SUCCESSFUL METHADONE TREATMENT PROGRAM.

5. IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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CURRENTLY SEEKING DIRECT USG ASSISTANCE BEYOND THAT ALREADY PROVIDED BY THE DEA OFFICE IN COOPERATIVE ENDORCEMENT EFFORTS. AT SOME LATER DATE, HONG KONG MAY WISH TO TRAIN TREATMENT AND REHABILITATION PERSONNEL IN THE UNITED STATES, BUT WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WOULD PROBABLY NOT INVOLVE U.S. FUNDING.

6. ON THE OTHER HAND, HONG KONG GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES

WILL BE SEEKING CONTINUED U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BROADER AND MORE EFFECTIVE REGIONAL NARCOTICS PROGRAMS. HONG KONG, THE UK AND THE U.S. HAVE ALREADY INITIATED A SERIES OF TRILATERAL MEETINGS WHICH HAVE HELPED ESTABLISH A CLOSER WORKING RELATIONSHIP, BUT MR. ROLPH WOULD LIKE TO SUPPLEMENT THIS WITH A LARGER FORUM. IN CONTACTS WITH THE UN COMMISSIONER AND IN A LETTER TO MR. CUSACK OF DEA THE HONG KONG NARCOTICS COMMISSIONER HAS SUGGESTED THAT SENIOR OFFICIALS OF INVOLVED SEA NATIONS MEET WITHOUT COMMITMENT TO REEXAMINE THE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES TO CONTROL OF OPIUM PRODUCTION IN THE "GOLDEN TRIANGLE." HE SUGGESTS THAT THE CURRENT PROGRAM OF CROP SUBSTITUTION, A PROGRAM WHICH HE CHARACTERIZES AS EXPENSIVE AND UNWORK-ABLE IN TURKEY, NEEDS TO BE REEXAMINED AND ALTERNATIVE METHODS EXPLORED FOR POSSIBLE REGIONAL APPLICATION. AT ANY RATE, MR. ROLPH WANTS TO DISCUSS THIS WITH AMBASSADOR VANCE DURING HIS VISIT TO HONG KONG LATER THIS MONTH.

7. WE, TOGETHER WITH OTHER POSTS IN THE REGION, WILL BE EXAMINING REGIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL PROBLEMS AT THE REGIONAL MEETING IN RANGOON STARTING ON THE 20TH OF THIS MONTH. WE HAVE SUGGESTED THAT THE MEETING'S AGENDA INCLUDE REEXAMINATION OF THE NATURE OF THE U.S. INTEREST INVOLVED IN OUR CONSIDERABLE REGIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. WE NEED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH SOUTHEAST ASIA'S PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING IN NARCOTICS ACTUALLY RESULTS IN THE SUPPLY OF NARCOTICS TO THE UNITED STATES. WHEN WE KNOW THIS, WE CAN BETTER DESIGN A PROGRAM WHICH TAILORS THE APPLICATION OF LIMITED U.S. RESOURCES TO ACTUAL U.S. INTERESTS. CROSS UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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